

## REMARKS

In the Official Action mailed on **May 24, 2004**, the Examiner reviewed claims 1-33. Claims 1-4, 8, 10-15, 17, 19, 21-26, 28, 30, and 32-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Hardy et al (USPN 6,073,242, hereinafter "Hardy"). Claims 5, 7, 9, 16, 18, 20, 27, 29, and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hardy.

### Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Independent claims 1, 12, and 23 were rejected as being anticipated by Hardy. Applicant respectfully points out that while Hardy teaches **authenticating a user** (see Hardy, col. 8, lines 20-35), Hardy does not suggest that the user can authenticate the signature server prior to sending a message to the signature server.

In contrast, the present invention **authenticates the signature server** prior to sending a message to the signature server (see claims 6, 17, and 28 of the instant application). This ensures that the signature server is an authorized signature server prior to disclosing a message to the signature server, thereby ensuring that the message is not sent to an illicit signature server. There is nothing within Hardy, either explicit or implicit, which suggests providing a mechanism that allows a user to authenticate the signature server prior to sending a message to the signature server.

Accordingly, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 12, and 23 to include the limitation from dependent claims 6, 17, and 28, respectively. Dependent claims 6, 17, and 23 have been canceled without prejudice.

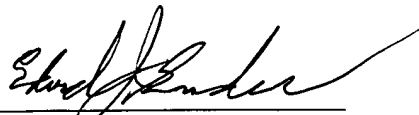
Hence, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 12, and 23 as presently amended are in condition for allowance. Applicant also submits that claims 2-5 and 7-11, which depend upon claim 1, claims 13-16 and 18-22, which depend upon claim 12, and claims 24-27 and 29-33, which

- depend upon claim 23, are for the same reasons in condition for allowance and for reasons of the unique combinations recited in such claims.

**CONCLUSION**

It is submitted that the present application is presently in form for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By   
Edward J. Grundler  
Registration No. 47,615

Date: August 23, 2004

Edward J. Grundler  
PARK, VAUGHAN & FLEMING LLP  
508 Second Street, Suite 201  
Davis, CA 95616-4692  
Tel: (530) 759-1663  
FAX: (530) 759-1665